
Government of the District of Columbia



**Office of the Deputy Mayor for
Public Safety and Justice**

Testimony of
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***Performance Oversight Hearing on "Effective Youth
Development: A Strategy to Ensure District Youth Grow
Up Problem-Free, Fully Prepared, and Fully Engaged"***

Special Committee on the Prevention of Youth Violent Crime
The Honorable Vincent C. Gray, Chair
Council of the District of Columbia

March 10, 2006

Room 500
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004
10:00 A.M.

Good afternoon Chairperson Gray and members of the Special Committee on the Prevention of Youth Violent Crime. I am Edward Reiskin, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice. I appreciate this opportunity to report to the committee today on the Mayor's Effective Youth Development Strategy implementation. As you just heard from Deputy Mayor Donald Walker's testimony, it is too early to formally evaluate the performance of the strategy – even the short-term initiatives that we kicked off in January after months of preparation. However, early indications are that we are laying the groundwork for exciting new interagency and community partnerships that will reach our highest risk youth and keep them safe. With this foundation, we will sustain our violence intervention efforts and transition to the positive youth development initiatives that comprise the medium- and long-term phases of the strategy.

In past hearings before this committee I have updated the committee on the progress of three initiatives that significantly rely on the energies of public safety officials in my cluster. This morning, for a change, you heard directly from the initiative champions representing the Partnership for Success, Rebuilding the Village, and the Violence Intervention Partnership (VIP). I am proud of the work they are doing and hope their testimony provided a helpful, first-hand perspective on how they are leveraging community-based resources to help put at-risk youth on the right path. My testimony this afternoon will cover performance management, as it is through performance measures and strategic result goals that we will judge the success of our efforts. Mr. Chairman, I recognize that performance measures have been a specific interest of yours and, in that light, I will walk you through our process for selecting the performance measures and goals that we believe will strategically guide the strategy and anchor it in the District's performance-based budgeting framework.

As you know, resolving the operational challenges that naturally arose when we created new collaborations between District and federal agencies with our community partners attracted the majority our attention to-date. And while the program design phase took longer than I would have liked, it was important to get the immediate-term initiatives up and running knowing that we could incorporate lessons learned along the way to improve the programs during implementation. An important part of this refinement of our efforts is establishing the strategy's performance management component. Recently, we convened a performance measures work group of government and community representatives to revisit the performance measures envisioned when we first developed the implementation plan in December from a strategy-wide perspective. This group has begun solidifying the performance measures and goals tied to the strategy so that a year from now we will have actual results by which to measure our progress.

The group's primary task has been to ensure consistency – between the strategy's performance measures and the District's performance-based budgeting (PBB) structure as well as between youth-related measures across the government. Using a common language between the District's PBB structure and the management of the strategy was a recommendation made by DC Action for Children (DC-ACT) in their testimony before the committee in January. To see this done, DC-ACT was invited to join the work group, which has already adopted the following performance management structure for the strategy:



From the bottom up, a suite of performance measures on the initiative level will guide the work of each initiative champion. Performance measures are defined as some output divided by some demand expressed as a percentage. For example, although the exact measure is still being refined, the Partnership for Success may report as one of its measures the percentage of kids enrolled in the program that are re-arrested by arrest type. Initiatives with a defined cohort of kids enrolled will track performance weekly on an individual basis to ensure the unique needs are being met for each youth enrolled in the program. Other initiatives that are limited to a particular part of the city, like the VIP, may measure the percentage of juvenile violent crime arrests in 6D and 7D or even down to the PSA level.

The next level of performance management will involve Key Result Measures (KRM)s. KRM)s are select performance measures that are included in the Mayor's proposed budget. While each initiative will have performance measures, not all initiatives will have a KRM. Many KRM)s that will be incorporated into the strategy are already reported by participating agencies. Others will be new measures that will fill gaps in our measurement of youth-related performance across the District discovered through an inventory of existing youth-related performance measures across all DC government agencies. By definition, Key Result Measures are our most important performance measures that will anchor the strategy into agency strategic business plans, monthly performance reports, and director performance contracts. I know for my cluster, the Mayor's Youth Development Strategy will be included in Chief Ramsey's FY06 performance contract as well as my own. By institutionalizing the strategy in performance management at the agency level through strategic business plans, the budget book, monthly performance reports, and director performance contracts, we will ensure that these initiatives live beyond this administration until each strategic goal is met.

At the top of our performance management structure are our Strategic Result Goals (SRGs) for each phase of the strategy: 1) the immediate-term Safety First! violence intervention initiatives, 2) the mid-term initiatives to establish an infrastructure for positive youth development in the District, and 3) the long-term initiatives to sustain improvements our youth development infrastructure. The SRGs will function as the high-level, citywide goals that will guide the work of the Executive Steering Committee in its management of the entire strategy. Although the Safety First! initiatives, at least in their infancy, are focused either on a small population or a

particular geographical area in the city, we do expect these programs to have a positive impact on citywide crime statistics and other goals we establish.

For each of the performance measures, Key Result Measures, and Strategic Result Goals it is important to note that target-setting is the next task to be tackled by the work group. For new measures and goals, a baseline will need to be established in FY06 before any target is set, but we did not want to hold up the implementation of the initiatives while we developed the performance measures. I believe that this is reasonable since reducing juvenile violence is a major long-term undertaking and simply reaching our most disconnected kids and putting them on a productive path will take a sustained effort over the course of years.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee today to discuss the Mayor's Effective Youth Development Strategy. I hope the testimonies you received from the initiative champions and their community partners this afternoon was helpful and I am available for any questions that you may have.